

THE STING OF THE MALE WASP, *MONOBIA*
*QUADRIDENS*BY PHIL RAU
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The females of solitary wasps have a functional sting, while male wasps are devoid of stings, but often the latter are not devoid of the desire to sting. In picking up males of *Sceliphron cæmentarium* and *Chalybion cæruleum*, one occasionally notes attempts to pierce one's flesh with the tip of the abdomen. Stinging by the males in these two species is not possible, but it may prove useful in frightening an enemy.

In *Monobia quadridens* the female can sting one's hand and cause a slight pain, but I was indeed surprised when I picked up a male to find him also able to inflict pain by piercing the flesh with the tip of his abdomen. The pain resembles that of a sharp needle prick and is over after a few seconds, since of course no poison is injected. The attempt at stinging by the male fulfills a purpose similar to the sting by the female because it effects the release and escape of the insect; the same behavior in its natural habitat, when trapped by an enemy, would prove beneficial to the male.